

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Support for claims 12-13 is found on page 3, lines 13-21 of the specification. Support for claim 14 is found on page 4, lines 16-17 of the specification. Support for claims 15-16 is found in claim 1 as originally presented. Support for claims 17-18 is found on page 5, lines 1-4 of the specification. Support for claim 19 is found on page 5, lines 6-8 of the specification. Support for claim 20 is found on page 5, lines 8-9 of the specification. No new matter would be added to this application by entry of this amendment.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-20 will now be active in the application.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The claimed invention is directed to a process for preparing autocatalytic polyether alcohols.

Autocatalytic polyether alcohols have been used in the preparation of polyurethanes. The use of some polyether alcohols to prepare polyurethanes none the less can suffer from odor and age resistance issues, which fuels further investigation.

The claimed invention addresses this problem by providing a process for preparing autocatalytic polyether alcohol comprising reacting an H-functional starter substance with alkylene oxides comprising a step of **dissolving the starter substance in a solvent**. Applicants have discovered that reaction of starter substance, which is **dissolved in a solvent**, with alkylene oxides provides for an autocatalytic polyether alcohol which has low amine emissions when used to prepare a polyurethane. Such a process is nowhere disclosed or suggested in the cited references of record.

In the rejections of claims 1-4 and 6-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Hinz et al., of claims 1-6, 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Horn et al. and of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hinz et al. in view of Horn et al. are respectfully traversed.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest the claimed process in which a starter substance is dissolved in a solvent.

Hinz et al. merely describes the preparation of polyoxyalkylene-polyols containing tertiary amino groups. The preparation process is described beginning at column 5, line 22 as by “methods known *per se*”. According to this process, in a first reaction step oxyalkylation is carried out without a catalyst, at atmospheric pressure and from 90-150°C followed by a second step, if appropriate, by anionic polymerization in the presence of an alkali metal hydroxide catalyst. No solvent is described. In Example 1, starter compound and propylene oxide are reacted in the absence of reporting any added solvent, followed by addition of an aqueous KOH solution. Accordingly, the reference fails to disclose or suggest dissolving the starter compound in a solvent.

Horn et al. describe, beginning at column 5, line 42, the preparation of polyoxyalkylene-polyols by known processes such as by anionic polymerization of alkylene oxides in the presence of at least one initiator molecule in the absence or preferable presence of a catalyst such as an alkali metal hydroxide. There is no disclosure of a step of dissolving starter substance in a solvent.

While the examiner asserts that Horn et al. disclose the reaction in the presence of a cyclohexane solvent, this assertion is in error. The examiner’s attention is directed to the disclosure at column 3, lines 34-37 where the reference states:

The novel polyoxyalkylene-polyols are excellent **solvents for certain blowing agents**, for example (cyclo)alkanes in particular cyclohexane, their addition enabling a considerable reduction in viscosity. Accordingly, the reference does not describe the use of a solvent in the preparation of polyether polyols, but rather describes that polyoxyalkylene-polyols are good solvents for blowing agents such as cyclohexane. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a step of dissolving the starter substance of a solvent. Emphasis added

Thus, this reference fails to describe the use of a solvent in the preparation of polyether alcohols, but rather only describes that, once prepared, polyether alcohols are themselves good solvents for blowing agents such as cyclohexane.

In contrast, the claimed invention is directed to a process in which starter substance is dissolved in a solvent. As the cited references fail to disclose or suggest dissolving the starter substance in a solvent the claimed invention is clearly neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by these references and accordingly withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph has been obviated by appropriate amendment.

Applicants have now amended Claim 8 to recite specific alkylene oxides which are reacted. While applicants disagree with the examiner's view that the phrase "predominantly" would be indefinite to those of ordinary skill in the art, in view of applicants amendment, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance and early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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